

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
IO-13 AID-05 /080 W
-----041448Z 127266 /43/53

O P 031250Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1358
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY
AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY
AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY
CINCPAC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 4464

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

(CORRECTED COPY - TAGS OMMITTED)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJECT: CONFUSION CONTINUES ON POLITICAL FRONT

1. THERE CONTINUES TO BE MOVEMENT ON THE BHUTTO/PNA NEGOTIATING
FRONT, BUT WHETHER THE TWO SIDES ARE ANY CLOSER TO AGREEMENT
IS STILL NOT KNOWN. ACTING PNA CHIEF PIR OF PAGARO HELD A
WIDELY IGNORED PRESS CONFERENCE LATE EVENING MAY SECOND.
(PIR SAHIB'S CREDIBILITY WITH THE WESTERN PRESS IS REACHING
NEW LOW BECAUSE OF HIS FREQUENT CONTRADITORY STATEMENTS,
AND HE IS POPULARLY KNOWN AMONG WESTERN JOURNALISTS AS
#BHUTTO'S SECRET WEAPON.")
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2. DURING CONFERENCE, PIR SAHIB SAID THAT BHUTTO HAD MET
WITH MUFTI MAHMUD FOR 45 MINUTES ON MAY SECOND AND GAVE MUFTI
A LETTER. PIR SAHIB ADDED THAT SAUDI AMBASSADOR IS
PLAYING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN MEDIATING BETWEEN BOTH SIDES (A
REPORT WE HAVE HEARD ELSEWHERE) AND AT PNA REQUEST MET
YESTERDAY WITH THE OPPOSITION LEADERS BEING HELD AT SIHALA

REST HOUSE. PIR SAHIB ALSO SAID THAT HE, AND PNA LEADERS NAWABZADA NASRULLAH KHAN AND PROFESSOR GHAFOR AHMED WOULD VISIT MUFTI IN THE HOSPITAL TODAY TO DISCUSS THE STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS. FINALLY, WITH THE ARREST OF MUSLIM LEAGUE OFFICIAL CHAUDHRY REMAT ELAHI, THZNPNA GENERAL COUNCIL WIL MEET TODAY AND ELECT A NEW ACTING SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PNA.

3. AS THE NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED IN THEIR DESULTORY AND SPORADIC MANNER, BHUTTO MUST BE WEIGHING IN HIS OWN MIND WHICH OF THE SEVERAL POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION TO FOLLOW. HE CAN MAKE SERIOUS EFFORTS TO REACH A SETTLEMENT WITH PNA WHICH WOULD, WE BELIEVE, HAVE TO INCLUDE MEETING THE PNA'S DEMAND FOR NEW NATIONAL ELECTIONS. ALTERNATIVELY, HE CAN HARDEN HIS POSITION AND REFUSE TO MEET ANY OF THE PNA'S DEMANDS. THE FORMER STRATEGY WOULD GIVE HIM SEVERAL MONTHS WITH THE COUNTRY GENERALLY CALM BEFORE NEW ELECTIONS ARE HELD. HE COULD AND WOULD USE THAT TIME TO TAKE WHATEVER STEPS HE THINKS NECESSARY AND POSSIBLE TO ENSURE HIS VICTORY IN NEW ELECTIONS. BY FOLLOWING THE LATTER COURSE HE COULD AVOID THE PROBLEM OF CONTESTING NEW ELECTIONS, BUT WOULD HAVE TO WEIGH THE POSSIBILITY OF RENEWED VIOLENCE IN THE STREETS, DIMINISHED MILITARY SUPPORT, AND RENEWED CHALLENGES TO HIS POSITION. WE WILL COMMENT ON THESE VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES AND BHUTTO'S POLITICAL FORTUNES LATER IN THE WEEK.

4. AS AN INTERESTING COMMENTARY ON PAKISTAN POLITICS, TONY CLIFTON OF NEWSWEEK HAS TOLD EMBOFF OF A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FAZEL ELAHI CHAUDHRY. CLIFTON SAID HE RECEIVED CONFIDENTIAL

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CALL FROM PRESIDENT'S OFFICE MORNING OF MAY SECOND AND WAS ASKED IF HE COULD IMMEDIATELY COME AND SEE THE PRESIDENT. CLIFTON, WHO HAD NOT REQUESTED AN APPOINTMENT, SPENT TWO HOURS WITH CHAUDHRY. ACCORDING TO CLIFTON, PURPOSE OF VISIT WAS TO SATISFY PRESIDENT'S CURIOSITY ON WHAT WAS HAPPENING. CHAUDHRY OPENED THE DISCUSSION BY TELLING CLIFTON MEETING WAS COMPLETELY OFF THE RECORD AND THEN ASKED, ZWHAT DO YOU THINK IS HAPPENING"? CLIFTON, SOMEWHAT TAKEN ABACK, VOLUNTEERED SOME THOUGHTS. THE PRESIDENT MADE VERY FEW COMMENTS ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION, BUT DID TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FIRST LULL IN THE CONVERSATION TO TAKE OUT COPY OF CONSTITUTION AND READ CHAPTER AND VERSE TO CLIFTON TO SHOW WHY HE WAS POWERLESS TO DO ANYTHING TO RESOLVE THE CRISIS. IN ONLY COMMENT ON THE OPPOSITION, THE PRESIDENT SAID THEY WERE A BUNCH OF INEFFECTUAL POLITICIANS AND HE TREATED THEM WITH SCORN. CHAUDHRY ADDED THAT THE PNA HAS ONLY TWO POLITICIANS WORTHY OF THE NAME, WALI KHAN AND ASGHAR KHAN. THE MEETING CLOSED WITH THE PRESIDENT THANKING CLIFTON FOR HIS BRIEFING.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Sent Date: 03-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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